

Harry Kim
Mayor



Dixie Kaetsu
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

HAWAI'I COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION

C/O 25 Aupuni Street #217, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone: 961-8316 ; Fax: 933-1521

REGULAR SESSION - MINUTES **January 11, 2006** **Liquor Control Conference Room** **Hilo Lagoon Centre**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Maedo at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Neil Brazier
James Browne
Dale Fergerstrom
Rudolph Hart
Karen Kudlo
Karen Maedo, Chair
Glen Matsuda
Wil Okabe

A quorum was present.

ALSO PRESENT:

Tom Brandt
Kaycie Carter
Laurie Kaneta
Quince Mento
Diane Noda, Deputy Corporation Counsel
Darryl Oliveira, Fire Chief
Noni Sanford

Chair Maedo thanked Commissioner Fergerstrom for his years of service and leadership as the former Chair.

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Commissioners: Neil Brazier, James Browne, Dale Fergerstrom, Rudolph Hart, Karen Kudlo
Karen Maedo, Glen Matsuda, Wil Okabe

STATEMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS (Open to the Public)

None

STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS (Executive Session)

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Okabe moved to accept the December 14, 2005, regular session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Browne and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Okabe moved to accept communication number 05-016 through 05-019. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. Volunteer Fire Chiefs Association's President Tom Brandt stated that a correction should be made to communication number 05-018. Communication number 05-018 should be from Wayne Krug, not Wayne F. Ching. The motion was amended to reflect the change and unanimously carried.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Fire Chief Darryl Oliveira acknowledged outgoing charter members, Commissioners Hart and Fergerstrom for their valued support over the years. Thank you gifts were presented to Commissioner Fergerstrom.

Chief Oliveira introduced members of the management team. These members include Assistant Chiefs Clesson Murasaki and Quince Mento, Battalion Chiefs Robert Bailey, Alvin Tabosa, Darren Rosario, Raymond Rowe, Rueben Chun and Michael Millare.

Chief Oliveira expressed the department's appreciation of these individuals. They demonstrated their abilities and earned the opportunity to be promoted.

Commissioner Fergerstrom thanked the members of the management team for taking the time to appear before the HCFC.

According to Chief Oliveira, as a result of the reorganization conducted last year, he intends to provide the commission with a comprehensive report by allowing the management team the opportunity to report the department's activities and operations to the commission. This will allow them a chance to explain first-hand current projects; thereby achieving recognition for their hard work and efforts.

Budget

- FY 2006/07: The budget submittal is scheduled for Friday, January 13, 2006, with the Department of Finance. An update will be provided at the next Fire Commission meeting.

Commissioner Kudlo questioned whether the Fire Department would learn if its budget will be approved at the meeting.

Chief Oliveira replied that although there may be some indication on what is being considered favorable, the department would be notified after the meeting. Once all the County Departments' supplemental budgets are reviewed, it is necessary for the County Council to balance the funds and prioritize how they will be distributed.

Chief Oliveira explained that this year's budget of \$2.3 million was lower than last year's \$4.1 million because a large amount of funds was set for the replacement of apparatus at the South Kona district. This year, the Fire Department is attempting to acquire alternative funding for the replacement of its equipment. Assistant Chief Mento recently turned in the Community Development Block Grant application to purchase replacement apparatus for the Pahoia and Kau Districts.

Alternative Funding and Grants

- FEMA FY 2005 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Anticipating the completion of the vehicle emissions control system's draft bid award proposal. Once completed, it will be submitted to the Department of Finance. Fire Fighters Neil Yoshioka and Gene Nakashima are researching the National Historic Preservation's requirements and assessing the electrical needs of the stations.
- FEMA FY 2004 Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant: Resulting from the recent appeal filed with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Chief Oliveira was informed on January 10, 2006, by the Office of the Corporation Counsel, that the appeal officer rendered a decision in favor of the HCFD. At the present time the department is awaiting a response from the Finance Director on what step to take next. An extension may be required; therefore the department will be contacting FEMA.

Chief Oliveira addressed Commissioner Matsuda's previous meeting's inquiry regarding the process of a bid appeal. He informed the commission that the first step was for a vendor to request the Department of Finance Director to have its bid reviewed and explain why it was not awarded. The vendor may challenge the decision further with the State's Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. At that time, a hearing

officer would render a decision. If the vendor continues to appeal, they would need to take it further with the court system.

Commissioner Matsuda questioned the DCCA involvement.

Chief Oliveira answered that the DCCA is the regulatory agency for the procurement laws.

Commissioner Brazier stated that submitting the lowest bid isn't necessarily the deciding factor.

Chief Oliveira replied that there were other factors involved, such as when a vendor takes exception to a requirement. The Department, which is the customer, needs to determine whether it wants to accept that exception as a reasonable accommodation.

- CDBG FY 2006 Grant Proposal: As mentioned earlier, recently submitted a Community Development Block Grant proposal for \$850,000 to purchase a replacement Pahoia Fire Engine and Pahala Fire Tanker.
- DOT Safe Highways Grant: Received \$33,000 to purchase air bag devices for distribution islandwide. Recently submitted the first quarter report; bid specifications are at the Department of Finance. The specifications were turned in, in December and the bid will be sent out in March. Therefore, the product will most likely be received in July.

Commissioner Fergerstrom questioned how long the department had been seeking grants.

Chief Oliveira replied that some of the grants, mainly CDBG, have been utilized extensively in the past. There has been more success with some of the other grants, such as the Fire Act grants and the DOT grants, which have received tremendous success.

Capital Improvement Projects

- Pahoia Fire Station: Awaiting the design plans from Architects Hawai'i, who are making changes and adjustments requested by the department. Projects Manager Nick AhYo is optimistic that the construction bid will go out by January/February.
- Fire Administration & Support Facility: Assistant Chief Mento and Projects Manager Nick AhYo are still working on the space requirements and needs assessment for the Training Bureau. Following this, the department selects the Design Consultants to put together conceptual designs, obtains cost projections and continues with the construction process. Projects Manager Nick AhYo is also working with the Department of Public Works on organizing the Design Consultant Selection Committee.

- Kalaoa Fire Station: Friday, January 13, 2006, is the scheduled deadline for the developer to give a final cost estimate for this project. At that time, the department will determine the County's position regarding this issue. A resolution is favored. However, at the same time, the department is considering alternative sites should things not work out.

Commissioner Browne questioned what alternate sites were being considered.

Chief Oliveira responded that there was a property being offered by the developer in the area. It is about 7/10 of a mile further north from the current site. This site is approximately 5-6 miles from Kailua, near the Matsuyama Mart. The existing site is a few tenths of a mile north on the makai side, directly across the Makalei Subdivision. The new parcel will still provide optimum coverage for the district because it will overlap with Kailua, and will keep a close proximity to the original plan. Based on the preliminary assessment of the property, it may have better site access and site clearance issues. There are some benefits if the project is moved.

Commissioner Browne asked what the timeline was if there is a move.

Chief Oliveira stated that the developer's (Bolton, Inc.) cost data deadline is January 13, 2006. Once that is received, a meeting will be scheduled with Mayor Kim to determine where the County is going with this project. At that time, there will be a determination on whether or not there will be a change in site locations. The commission will be offered a better idea of a timeline at the February meeting.

Chief Oliveira mentioned that the project will move faster because certain phases of it are in place and the Pahoia Station would be used as a template for the station's design.

Commissioner Browne asked whether it was possible for the commission to receive a floor plan of the station.

Chief Oliveira replied that when the final floor plan design is received from Architects Hawai'i, it will be circulated to the commission, as well as to the stations. This allows feedback from the personnel to see if something was overlooked and makes them aware that their past suggestions, such as adding public restrooms, bigger apparatus bays, an exercise room, etc. were taken into account. These suggestions have been included in the plan. This is a reason why the station is costing over 4 million dollars.

Commissioner Matsuda stated "the Kalaoa Fire Station has taken some time because of the site acquisition issue that was brought up a long time ago." He asked if the Fire Department favors some other site at this

particular point in time or whether the department is still going to try to hold Bolton down.

Chief Oliveira replied that the first issue the department considers is what is needed in the community, and tries to meet and address that need. Another consideration is that the price is allotted for this project and that was based on where it was going to go originally. To make a change may delay not only the construction but may change the dollar amount. At the same time, the department does not want to take away what is needed from the community. The Fire Department's position when looking for a proposed site for a Fire Station is to consider what's the best site to service the community, the projected growth in the area, and the sites accessibility to the public. A fair portion of business is drive-in business, whether people are looking for directions, looking for help, or needing aid for an actual incident. Also, the parcel needs to accommodate the station's design, and because there is difficulty finding training areas in the community, there is a need to have a good terrain for training. Another consideration is that the parcel is able to support aircraft but not be intrusive to neighbors. Lastly, there is the department's mission with disaster/response being up and running. The parcel needs to be a place where the department will be operational in times of all disasters. It must be able to support mass casualties and to deal with a spectrum of large incidents. This project began in 1999, prior to the current administration coming on board. The site was already identified. The department is trying to make it work for the community. If it doesn't, they will need to work with the community and inform them of the relocation.

Commissioner Matsuda questioned whether the project was ready to go forward if the issue with Bolton is resolved.

Chief Oliveira responded that the Office of the Corporation Counsel would be looking into this further. But if the parcel needs to be purchased, then it is necessary to consider if the parcel is in the county's best interest.

- Central Fire Station: No new update.
- Central Fire Station-Retrofit Project: Project went out to bid and will be open on February 2, 2006.
- CIP Six Year Program: Submitted to Planning Department. As discussed at the last meeting, a total of 13 projects submitted in order of priority through FY 2009-10.

Chief Oliveira stated that the HCFD wants to secure the Projects Manager position.

Commissioner Fergstrom asked whether the Project Manager position would be a civil service or a contracted position.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department would prefer civil service because it is secure and permanent. Whereas contracted money may not be there all the time.

- Paaulo Volunteer Fire Station: Finance Department has given us approval on five acres at this site and allowed pursuit of funding.

Promotions and Hiring

- Internal Recruitment's: Active recruitment's include: Three Fire Radio Dispatchers, One Fire Mechanic. Interviews and assessments will be scheduled soon.
- Captain, FEO, and Prevention Inspector positions. Recently received the results of the exam scores from the Department of Civil Service and will be notifying the candidates. An update will be given at the next meeting.

Emergency Operations Division

- Penalties for Arson: As requested by Commissioner Okabe at last month's meeting, penalties imposed upon minors for arson investigations cannot be determined because of the fact that it depends on the juvenile's age, criminal history, and the severity of the offense, unless they are tried as an adult. Penalties are standardized statewide.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda stated that the level of the offense depends on the dollar amount of damage or whether it was intentionally set. In Juvenile Court, if a juvenile sets a fire, the sentence will be according to the Hawai'i penal code. For parents to be held accountable, such as when the Tea House was burnt at Liliuokalani Park, the County's Office of the Corporation Counsel sued the parents in a civil suit and the parents paid out of their homeowner's insurance.

Commissioner Fergerstrom stated that the penalties imposed are very complicated.

Deputy Corporation Counsel Noda stated that even the criminal property damage statute's highest level is not more than \$20,000 in damage, or a maximum of 10 years in prison. It is a Class B felony.

Ms. Noni Sanford mentioned that Russell Kokubun tried to lobby the legislature; however, his proposal was turned down.

Chief Oliveira stated that in the past three years, there has been a 2.5-2.6% increase in population. At the same time, the department has seen a nine percent increase in calls. The population increase may not be accurate because the population data for 2004 was only up to July. Also, it may not include visitor data.

Commissioner Browne stated that he attended the Fire Chief's Conference and spoke with the Kauai Fire Chief, who informed him that they count their visitors as part of their population. He volunteered to research and locate figures on visitors for a year for District 8 and 9.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would appreciate that information.

Commissioner Fergerstrom asked whether his research would only be restricted to those two districts.

Commissioner Browne stated that because that is where the largest visitor population is concentrated, he would like to start with those two districts.

Commissioner Fergerstrom suggested that he compare his statistics with the official government statistics.

Support Services Division

Prevention Bureau:

- Fireworks permits: Sold 1,684 permits islandwide, grossed a total of \$42,100.

Training Bureau

- 32nd Firefighter Recruit Class: Presently in their EMT-Intermediate class. Scheduled to graduate on February 17, 2006. Following this, they will be assigned to their companies on March 1, 2006.
- 33rd Firefighter Recruit Class: Presently in driver training.

Assistant Chief Mento mentioned that an issue that has come to his attention is that the Harbors Division is requiring that anyone responding to harbor emergencies receive security training. This basically entails watching a 41-minute video.

EMS Bureau

- Automatic External Defibrillators (AED): The software needs to be installed into the computer at the companies to extract the data. Once that is done, the AED's will be distributed to the various companies, and the old stock will be returned to the warehouse.
- Electronic Ambulance Report Form committee: Members were selected and held its first meeting on January 10, 2006.

Auxiliary Services

- Maintenance Shop: Anticipating filling the Mechanic position.

- Warehouse: Recently received the breathing apparatus units. Presently conducting an inventory and will proceed with distributing the equipment and coordinating training islandwide. At the present time personnel are volunteering to pick up and receive equipment from the warehouse. The department is trying to obtain a quote from Mihara Trucking regarding delivery of supplies to the stations. This will be more efficient, because the department is able to schedule deliveries, and its personnel will need to sign receipts. Also, Fire Communication Control Center is working on filling three dispatcher vacancies. Recently created a Radio Dispatcher supervisor position. There is a need to create criteria on what the dispatcher's job description entails, as well as the temporarily assigned personnel's qualifications and backgrounds. Working on job performance rating for Radio Dispatch positions.

Volunteer Training Section

- Volunteer Chiefs' meeting to be held this Saturday, January 14, 2006, at 10:00 a.m., at Station 17-A. Hosted by Wayne Krug. Tom Brandt encourages the commissioners to attend. Chief Oliveira will not be able to attend. He will be attending the Firefighter Recruit Agility test scheduled for the same day.

New Projects/Business

- 2006 Legislature: Submitted proposal to increase the EMS budget by \$512,931 to provide dedicated staffing for the air medical helicopter.
- Fireworks permits: Working with Representative Jerry Chang on various fireworks legislation. The HCFD is hoping to change the law so that it will allow the County's Fire Department to delegate authority to the vendors to sell the permits. Some of the complaints received were that the county is making it difficult to obtain permits.
- 32nd Firefighter Recruit Class Graduation: To be held on Friday, February 17, 2006, starting at 5:00 p.m., at Nani Mau Gardens. Invitations will be sent to the commissioners.

Employee/Public Relations

- 4th Annual Employee Awards and Recognition Dinner: Scheduled for March 18, 2006, at King Kamehameha Hotel in Kona. Invitations will be mailed to commissioners this month.
- Hawaii Heart Walk: 9th Annual Heart Walk to benefit American Heart Association will be held on February 11, 2006, at 8:00 a.m., starting at Liliuokalani Gardens. Commissioners are invited to attend.

Commissioner Browne questioned the timeline on the aerial truck for West Hawai'i.

Chief Oliveira stated that the bid period comes up in March, and they are expecting to have construction and delivery by early 2007.

Commissioner Browne inquired where the truck would be located.

Chief Oliveira stated that the department is deciding on its location. Both sides of the island are in need of an aerial apparatus.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Update on the Fire Chief's evaluation.

Commissioner Fergerstrom compiled the Fire Chief's evaluation forms. Before reviewing the results with Chief Oliveira and Mayor Harry Kim, he asked if there were any concerns or comments from the members.

Chair Maedo questioned where the evaluation forms would be filed.

Commissioner Fergerstrom stated that the evaluation forms would be submitted to the Fire Commission's Secretary and would be filed with the commission's records.

Commissioner Okabe questioned whether the members' individual score sheets would be submitted as part of the commission's overall evaluation.

Commissioner Fergerstrom stated that copies of the score sheets would be submitted to the Mayor.

Commissioner Kudlo asked how the five performance categories were selected.

Chair Maedo stated that it was developed to be similar to the Police Commission's evaluation form for the Police Chief. Also, her educational and administrative background played a part in her development of the five performance categories. She mentioned that suggestions or revisions were continuously allowed for consideration by the commission.

Chief Oliveira stated that he would like to eventually work on having an evaluation done by the rank and file.

In light of the issue raised with the Honolulu Police Chief, Chair Maedo advised Chief Oliveira that the commission had discussed this matter at the previous meeting, which he was unable to attend. The Fire Commission decided that it was not necessary.

Chief Oliveira stated that this process would get feedback from the rank and file and would be appreciated by the administration in order to get a true perception of their comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance (Hart/Matsuda) No report.

Office Management and Staffing (Brazier/Okabe) No report.

Rules and Policies (Maedo) No report.

Public Relations (Browne/Kudlo) Commissioner Kudlo mentioned that there is a need to find a more active way to inform the public about Firewise, such as door to door information. This is an urgent project for her district.

Chief Oliveira stated that there was a door to door assessment or survey of properties conducted in Waikoloa. The Association can share that information with the community to show which homes are at high risk for brush fires.

Training and Education (Brazier/Maedo) No report.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, February 8, 2006, at 10:00 a.m., in the Liquor Control Conference Room, Hilo Lagoon Centre, 101 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i.
- Set agenda for February 8, 2006, meeting.
 - Follow up on the Fire Chief's evaluation.

Commissioner Fergstrom stated that he enjoyed working with the Fire Commission. In the beginning there were very diverse opinions, but in the process of organizing the commission and selecting the chief, he saw a tremendous amount of compromise and support among the commissioners. He thanked everyone for their commitment and dedication.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

KAYCIE A. I. CARTER
Secretary